

the '452 patent taken in further view of WO 93/10,772 or over the '230 patent taken in view of WO '772. The Examiner takes the position that the prior art teaches administering estrogen and progesterone from a single transdermal device with two separate compartments and sees no invention in two compartments with separate protective films and those having a single piece protective film.

Applicants respectfully traverse these grounds of rejection since it is deemed that the prior art cited would not teach one skilled in the art Applicants' device for transdermal administration of two active ingredients with compartment (A) containing an adhesive polymer matrix with the first active ingredient and compartment (B) containing an adhesive polymer matrix with the second active component, with the individual polymer matrixes being covered with individual protective films a and a' and compartments A and B supported on a single protective film spaced 1 to 10 mm apart.

Applicants' construction has the advantage that compartments A and B are protected by a single peel-off protective film which can be removed to expose two separate patches that can be fixed to the patient's skin. The two compartments are separated by 1 to 10 mm and results in a device with a single protective film with these advantages.

In contrast thereto, all the primary references cited by the Examiner disclose a package with two separate and distinctive films which lack the ease of removing of a single protective film which when removed, results in two separate patches to be fixed to the patient's skin easily.

With respect to the '931 patent, this relates to a system comprising two active ingredients containing matrix layers arranged side by side wherein one matrix is loaded with one active ingredient and the other matrix is loaded with a second active ingredient. The two matrixes are separated by a space and care must be taken for sufficient spacing of the area's to prevent the fusion of the active ingredient into the other area and this is not applicant's invention. The difference in the devices can be seen in Figure 3 of the '931 patent and in Figures 4 and 6 of the '736 patent. There are always two separate compartments separated by a space but the two compartments are supported by the same adhesive matrix covering itself by the same peel off protective film. This means you'll have one patch with two compartments in contrast to applicants' two separate compartments, which are fixed by two separate patches on the skin.

With respect to the '394 patent, this teaches a transdermal therapeutic reservoir system having 1-3 matrix layers adhering to the cover layer that contains the active ingredients which are permanently self adhering for these components and surrounded by a skin contact adhesive that optionally contains penetration enhancing agents and a removable protective layer. It does not teach applicant to contain their systems and therefore withdrawal of these grounds of rejection is requested.

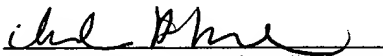
The secondary references taken with the primary references do not teach Applicants' invention since they do not in any way teach a single protective film for two separate compartments or the advantages of Applicants' invention.

The device of the invention has the advantage that the single peel-off film supports both compartments A and B and once the peel-off protective film is removed, the separate patches may be applied so that the active ingredients may be used together, individually or spread over a period of time and allows the administration in any desired combination. The Examiner's attention is directed to pages 3 to 5 of the specification re the various advantages with respect to the prior art. Therefore, withdrawal of these grounds of rejection are requested.

With respect to the trademarks, it is believed that the same have been properly used but if there is a specific oversight, Applicants will correct the same if the Examiner calls it to the undersign's attention.

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that the claims point out Applicants' patentable contribution. Therefore, favorable reconsideration the application is requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosures